



EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT NEWS
The Monthly Electronic Newsletter of
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This measurement shows more than two feet of snow at a Concord home during the February blizzard. Some parts of the state got much more.

WMUR-TV photo

DISASTER DECLARATION GRANTED FOR BLIZZARD – President Obama has granted Governor Maggie Hassan's request for a major disaster declaration in eight New Hampshire counties as a result of the blizzard that occurred Feb. 8-10. The declaration was granted on March 19. The Governor asked for financial aid for Belknap, Carroll, Cheshire, Hillsborough, Merrimack, Rockingham, Strafford and Sullivan counties. The federal aid will pay 75 percent of the disaster response costs in the affected counties, including snow removal and damage to public property. The total cost of the storm to the state, municipalities and eligible non-profit organizations was estimated at nearly \$5 million.

Applicant briefings for entities seeking disaster assistance will be held the week of April 1. An important criterion in determining eligibility for disaster aid is whether a county has received record or near-record snowfall. Governor Hassan noted that Carroll County received 30.5 inches of snow during the storm. That was an increase of 160 percent over the previous record of 19 inches. Hillsborough County received 25.5 inches and Rockingham County received 24.1 inches of snow.

ANOTHER STORM WRAPS UP WINTER – March 19 was the last day of winter, but Old Man Winter wasn't ready to quit. A major winter storm moved into New England early in the morning and dumped more than a foot of snow on southern parts of New Hampshire and lesser amounts farther north. The storm made travel hazardous throughout the state and forced the cancellation of activities at more than 750 schools and other institutions. But the snow did not cause more severe problems. The state's four electric utilities reported no significant storm-related outages. HSEM conducted several conference calls to brief state and local officials on the status of the storm, but the State Emergency Operations Center was not activated.

N.H. HELPS CONNECTICUT WITH SCHOOL VIOLENCE – The State of Connecticut is still reeling from the shootings at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown last Dec. 14 that killed 20 children and six staff members. Gregg Champlin, who specializes in school emergency planning at HSEM, was asked to testify before Gov. Daniel Malloy's Sandy Hook Advisory Committee. At a hearing in Hartford on March 8, Champlin urged Connecticut officials to keep emergency plans simple, noting that New Hampshire's 2007 school emergency law is only two paragraphs long. He also urged the panel to promote the seven emergency actions that are the heart of his program for New Hampshire schools. Those include evacuation; reverse evacuation; drop, cover and hold; and shelter in place. Champlin's presentation received extensive news coverage. News organizations noted that New Hampshire is the only New England state that has a single point person to deal with school emergency planning.

BUDGET SEQUESTER CUTS HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDS – After weeks of wrangling between Congressional Republicans and the Obama Administration, the long anticipated budget sequester went into effect on March 1. How long the impasse will continue and what the long-term effects will be remain unclear. But some budget cuts will affect public safety and emergency management in New Hampshire almost immediately. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano wrote to Governor Hassan to say that \$158,000 was being cut from the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program and Adequate Fire and Emergency Response Grants. Emergency Management Performance Grants and Homeland Security Grants are being cut by \$314,000. U.S. Coast Guard operations in Portsmouth Harbor and along the coast are being curtailed by 25 percent. Additional cuts are being made in operations of the Transportation Security Administration at Manchester-Boston Regional Airport and Customs and Border Protection activities at the U.S.-Canadian border. Nationally, the Disaster Relief Fund is being cut by \$1 billion.

FEMA OFFERS ONLINE COURSE FOR NEW EMERGENCY MANAGERS – The Federal Emergency Management Agency is offering an online independent study course to help emergency managers new to the job to get acquainted with their responsibilities and oriented to the field. It is also a good review for current emergency managers. The course, IS-1.a, is at:

<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/courseOverview.aspx?code=IS-1.a>

VY SHUTS DOWN FOR REFUELING – The Vermont Yankee nuclear power plant has been shut down for refueling and will be off-line until early April. The plant was disconnected from the regional electric grid at 10 p. m. on March 9. VY has completed its 30th operating cycle, operating for 493 consecutive days. It was last refueled in November 2011. The project involves the work of Vermont Yankee staff supplemented by other workers, including employees from parent company Entergy's other nuclear plants. Those include radiation protection technicians, engineers, inspectors, millwrights, electricians, pipefitters, boilermakers, welders, painters, equipment operators, insulators, carpenters and laborers. The refueling outage creates about \$2.5 million of economic activity in the region through local purchases of goods and services.

NATURAL GAS RELIANCE POSES THREAT TO REGIONAL POWER SUPPLY – The head of New England's regional electric grid has told a U.S. House panel that reliance on natural gas to power generators threatens its power supply, especially during the winter months. Gordon van Welie, president and chief executive officer of ISO New England, testified on March 19 before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Energy and Power. Van Welie told the lawmakers that in the past 10 years New England has shifted from a mix of oil, coal, nuclear and gas generation to a system that is heavily dependent on natural gas to generate electricity. More than half of New England's power is generated by natural gas.

Van Welie said the low cost of natural gas has benefited consumers by reducing the wholesale price of power. Natural gas also reduces air pollution. But he said demand for natural gas as a heating fuel reduces supplies available for power generation. He said gas-fired generators need to have reliable fuel supplies year round.

AUTHOR TO LECTURE ON STATION NIGHTCLUB FIRE – Attorney John Baryllick, author of *Killer Show: The Station Nightclub Fire, America's Deadliest Rock Concert*, will present a lecture on the disaster at the N.H. Fire Academy on Monday, April 8. The fire, on February 20, 2003, in West Warwick, R.I., killed 100 people when a pyrotechnic display during a performance by the band Great White set insulation tiles on fire. The victims were trapped when they could not exit the building. Admission to the lecture 6:30 p.m. lecture is \$10, with all proceeds to be donated to the Station Fire Memorial Fund. For more information or to register in advance, go to: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/training/documents/stationnightclub.pdf>.

EXPLORER PROGRAMS RETURN TO FIRE ACADEMY – The N.H. Fire Academy is preparing for summer programs in public safety services for young people. The Emergency Management Academy provides practical experience in fire, police, and emergency medical services and encourages participants to consider them as a career. Camp Fully Involved provides experience in the fire service for young women. Last year more than 30 cadets from the U.S., Canada and France participated. The academy will also run a Fire Explorers program. The academy recently contacted more than 200 guidance counselors from 70 high school districts to spread the word about the youth programs.

Keep up with emergency preparedness information in New Hampshire on www.readynh.nh.gov and [Twitter.com/ReadyNH](https://twitter.com/ReadyNH). For information on upcoming training and classes go to: <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/fstems/training/schedtrdates.html>